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Illegal Israeli actions in Occupied East Jerusalem and the rest of the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Security Council
Seventy-first year

Identical letters dated 26 February 2016 from the Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, the President of the General Assembly and the President of the Security Council

It is with great urgency that we continue to write to you regarding the deteriorating political, humanitarian, security and socioeconomic situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, due to the ongoing illegal policies and practices of Israel, the occupying Power.

In this regard, I once again draw your attention to the arbitrary detention of Palestinian journalist Mohammed Al-Qiq, age 33, who is now in the ninety-fourth day of a hunger strike in protest against his administrative detention by Israel, the occupying Power, without charge. Doctors who are observing the health of Mr. Al-Qiq are anticipating his death at any moment, as they have reported that his body has now collapsed and that he is unable to speak. It must be recalled that Mr. Al-Qiq is one of 530 Palestinians who continue to be held without charge or trial in an Israeli prison or detention centre, and it should be noted that this number is just a fraction of the total number of more than 6,000 Palestinians who are currently incarcerated by the occupying Power. Today, media reports have emerged that an agreement has been reached to put an end to Mr. Al-Qiq's administrative detention. In this regard, we call on the international community to intervene and to call on the occupying Power to immediately release Mr. Al-Qiq, as well as the other Palestinian prisoners and detainees, including those who continue to be held without charge or trial.

On another front, civilian casualties continue to rise and fear and tensions are mounting as a result of the continued violent Israeli criminal actions being committed against the Palestinian people with complete and utter impunity. It is in this connection that we report to you that the Palestinian Ministry of Health has documented that since the beginning of October 2015, the Israeli occupying forces have killed at least 180 Palestinians, many of them children, and have injured more than 15,200 Palestinians, many of whom will have to live the rest of their lives with indescribable trauma, as well as permanent disabilities.

Please recycle

Below are just some of the innumerable crimes perpetrated by Israel, the occupying Power, in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, in the period since our previous letter to you:

18 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces detained three Palestinians in the West Bank.
- Two Palestinian children, Ayham Bassam Ibrahim Subih (age 14), and Omar Salim Rimawi (age 14) were shot and critically injured by occupying forces north-west of Jerusalem.

19 February 2016:

- Khaled Taqatqa (age 21) was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces in the Bethlehem village of Beit Fajjar.
- Mohammed Abu Khalaf (age 20) was shot dead by occupying forces outside Damascus Gate in Jerusalem's Old City.
- Abed Raed Abdullah Hamad was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces in the village of Silwad, near Ramallah.

20 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces detained a Palestinian child, Karam Atef Qasas (age 13), near Al-Ibrahmi Mosque in Al-Khalil, and summoned a youth from the Ramallah area for forced interrogation.

21 February 2016:

- A Palestinian minor was shot and injured by Israeli occupying forces before having been detained near the illegal Israeli settlement of "Kiryat Arba", to the east of Al-Khalil.
- Occupying forces detained 17 Palestinians from across the West Bank.
- Qusai Abu Ar-rub (age 17) was shot and killed by occupying forces near "Beta junction", to the south of Nablus.
- Three Palestinians were physically assaulted by occupying forces prior to and during their illegal detention at "Al-Maskobyeh" Israeli detention centre in northern Jerusalem.
- Israeli occupying forces shot live fire at Palestinian farmers to the south-east of Gaza city.

22 February 2016:

- A number of Palestinian teenagers were injured by rubber-coated steel bullets during clashes with Israeli occupying forces in the town of Qabatiya, south of Jenin.
- Occupying forces detained 20 Palestinians from across the West Bank.
- Occupying forces closed all roads leading to the town of Qabatiya, south of Jenin.
- Occupying forces served Palestinians with so-called notices to demolish three residential structures, two tents and three sheep barns in the villages of Tabban and Fakheit in Masafer Yatta, south of Al-Khalil.

23 February 2016:

- At least three Palestinians were injured by rubber-coated steel bullets, while dozens of others were suffocated by tear gas fired by Israeli occupying forces during clashes in the blockaded town of Qabatiya, south of Jenin.
- Occupying forces detained 30 Palestinians, including a 50-year-old blind man, during military raids across the West Bank.
- An elderly Palestinian woman, Zainab Rashida (age 60), was killed and her daughter, Fatima Abdul Yassin (age 30), was wounded when they were hit by a car driven by an Israeli settler in Jericho.

24 February 2016:

- Occupying forces served the families of three Palestinian teenagers who had been recently shot dead by occupying forces with demolition orders to their homes located in the town of Qabatiya, south of Jenin.
- Israeli naval boats opened machine gun fire on Palestinian fishermen who were sailing within the six-nautical-mile fishing zone offshore from Gaza.
- Occupying forces detained at least 17 Palestinians and summoned another during raids across the West Bank, mostly in Al-Khalil and Ramallah.
- Israeli occupying forces shot and moderately injured a Palestinian youth near the illegal "Gush Etzion" settlement bloc on the Al-Khalil-Bethlehem road.

25 February 2016:

- Israeli occupying forces detained 33 Palestinians during raids into several West Bank districts.
- Israeli occupying forces stormed and took measurements of the family house of Mamdouh Amro in the town of Dura, south of Al-Khalil, in preparation for planned demolition.
- Israeli bulldozers razed Palestinian agricultural structures in the town of Ni'lin, north-west of Ramallah.
- A group of aggressive settlers attacked Palestinians in Salaymeh neighbourhood, in the Old City of Al-Khalil.

26 February 2016:

- Israeli naval boats opened fire on Palestinian fishing boats off the coast of the southern Gaza Strip.
- A Palestinian was shot dead by Israeli occupying forces near the illegal settlement of "Beit El", north of Ramallah.

We wish to also bring to your attention that on Sunday, 21 February 2016, Israeli occupying forces, accompanied by 30 vehicles and bulldozers, demolished a Bedouin school for children in the Abu Al-Nuwaar community, near the town of Al-Eizariya in the occupied West Bank. It should be noted that this elementary school, which was funded by the European Union, was the sole school in the area, comprising six classrooms for first- and second-graders. Prior to demolishing the elementary school, occupying forces seized all its contents.

Unfortunately, this illegal practice of demolitions by the occupying Power is on the rise, as the number of Palestinians displaced thus far in 2016 is already equivalent to over half of the total number displaced in all of 2015. In this regard, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has documented that, between 1 January and 15 February 2016, 283 Palestinian homes and other structures have been destroyed, dismantled or confiscated by the Israeli occupying forces, displacing 404 Palestinians, including 219 children. As was stated by the United Nations Coordinator for Humanitarian and Development Activities in the Occupied Palestinian Territory: "International law is clear — Palestinians in the West Bank have the right to adequate housing and the right to receive humanitarian assistance ... As the occupying power, Israel is obliged to respect these rights."

Last, we must bring to your attention the latest example of the constant Israeli incitement against the Palestinian people, which not only makes blatantly clear Israel's true feelings about the Palestinian people it holds captive, but also provides a terrifying insight into its dangerous intentions. On Tuesday, 23 February 2016, Israel's Education Minister, Naftali Benett, who is notoriously known for his hateful, racist rhetoric and incitement against Palestinians, was quoted in the media as stating: "We have to bury Palestinian anti-occupation fighters in secret cemeteries and knock down all the homes in their native villages ... Let's roll into every single home and rake through every single corner. The anti-occupation fighter must bear in mind that all of those around him are under threat."

This outrageous type of incitement must be condemned and stopped. It is clear that the occupying Power plans on continuing, as it has unsuccessfully tried to do over the course of nearly five decades of occupation, to crush any type of resistance against this illegal, belligerent occupation, irrespective of the fact that the Palestinian people have the right to resist occupation under international law, as well as the right to peaceful assembly, as enshrined in human rights law, and the right to demand their inalienable rights, including to self-determination and freedom, as recognized by the overwhelming majority of countries worldwide.

Given the above-mentioned realities of Israel's violations, we continue to call on the international community, including the Security Council, which has the primary Charter duty for the maintenance of international peace and security, to uphold its responsibilities and take immediate action to end all of Israel's violations and incitement against the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem. Israel cannot be permitted to act as a State above the law and must be compelled to comply with all of its obligations under international law, including humanitarian law and human rights law, and to finally end its illegal occupation. For as long as the Palestinian people are left without protection and without the fulfilment of their inalienable rights and legitimate national aspirations, and as long as the international community does not act, Israeli impunity will continue and, as our letters week after week prove, this will result in the loss of more innocent civilian lives, along with the loss of the prospects for peace.

The present letter is in follow-up to our 575 previous letters regarding the ongoing crisis in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, which constitutes the territory of the State of Palestine. These letters, dated from 29 September 2000 (A/55/432-S/2000/921) to 18 February 2016 (A/ES-10/712-S/2016/158), constitute a basic record of the crimes being committed by Israel, the

occupying Power, against the Palestinian people since September 2000. For all of these war crimes, acts of State terrorism and systematic human rights violations being committed against the Palestinian people, Israel, the occupying Power, must be held accountable and the perpetrators be brought to justice.

I should be grateful if you would arrange to have the present letter distributed as a document of the tenth emergency special session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 5, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Riyad **Mansour**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer of the State of Palestine to the United Nations